



WORLD STUDENT DAY RENEW

Reflections from Scripture

Friday 21
October 2022



***“See, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
I am making a way in the wilderness
And streams in the wasteland.”***

(Isaiah 43:19)

Praise God that he doesn't just make things better. He makes them new.

Real renewal is never something we can manufacture. At our best we are still the same old creatures of failure and mediocrity. Renewal only comes from outside our broken world and its broken people.

But God is bringing the whole of creation to newness of life. He's calling us to put down our distractions to let ourselves be brought into the freedom and glory of his kingdom.

Students around the world are yearning for this newness after the pandemic, political turmoil, and natural disasters of recent years. For our day of prayer this October, let's turn to God from our own inadequacies, and embrace the new things he is doing in our individual lives, our student groups, our churches, and our universities.

As a global fellowship, we must put our faith in the God of the streams in the wasteland.

These reflections are meant to help you prepare your heart for this year's World Student Day. Use them in your own prayer times, or with your prayer group on World Student Day itself. We hope and pray that these reflections will deepen your experience of God's renewal in your life and on your campus this year.

Warmly,

Abbie, Eliza, Maéva, Mélanie, and Tim





The Reality of Renewal

God is in the business of renewal, restoration, and redemption.

From the very moment of God's curse over creation, the hope of redemption has been promised. "He will crush your head", God informs the serpent in the garden, even while "you strike his heel" (Genesis 3:15).

The whole story of history is really the story of how God is restoring and renewing the whole world.

HE RENEWS YOUR LIFE

"He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life." (Titus 3:4-7).

Jesus grants us the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Spirit; both "the entry into new life and ... the effecting of the new life itself".¹

This verse presents renewal as a striking reversal of fortunes, through its Old Testament allusions. Earlier references in Titus to Ezekiel 36 mean that readers coming to this verse are already immersed in prophecy about the newness the Spirit brings:

"I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws." (Ezekiel 36:26-27).

The echo in Titus of the prophecy of Joel 3:1 ("I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh") "strikes a chord that is simultaneously harmonious and dissonant. The promise of the Spirit links firmly to Ezekiel, but the verb 'pour out' clangs against the dominant use of 'outpouring' to describe God's wrath in Ezekiel ... Paul paints a picture of dramatic reversal of wrath and judgement."²

**Through Christ, instead of pouring out his wrath,
God pours out his Spirit to renew us.**





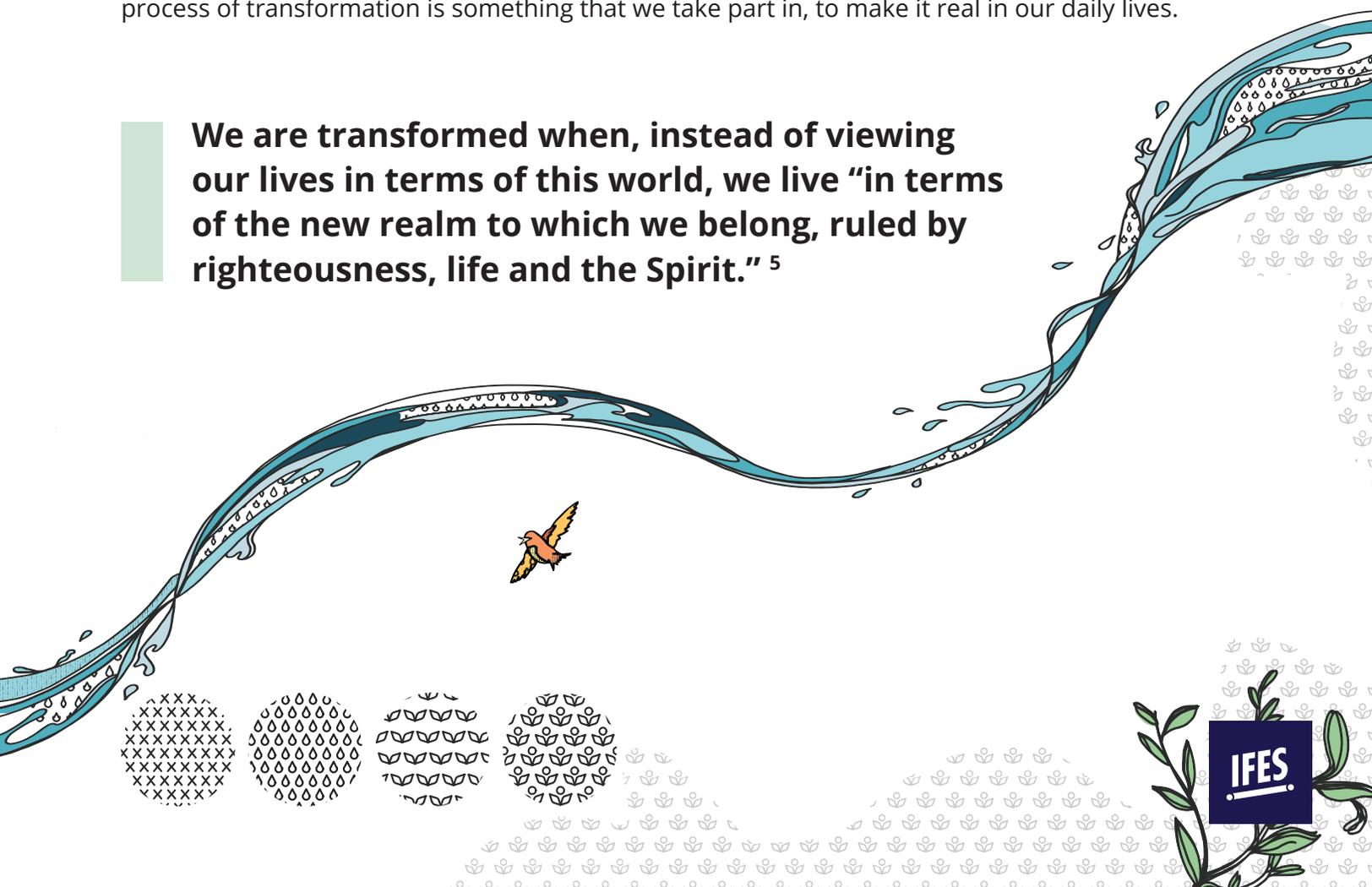
He Renews Your Mind

“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.”
(Romans 12:2)

The Greek *metemorphōthē*, which here has been translated “transformed”, is only used in the gospels to refer to Jesus’ transfiguration (Matthew 17:2; Mark 9:2).³ As Jesus’ “face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light”, so the Spirit can enact something similarly wondrous and mysterious in our minds.

The transfer from sin and death to righteousness and life “does not absolve the Christian from the responsibility to live out the righteousness so graciously granted in the gospel.”⁴ The process of transformation is something that we take part in, to make it real in our daily lives.

We are transformed when, instead of viewing our lives in terms of this world, we live “in terms of the new realm to which we belong, ruled by righteousness, life and the Spirit.”⁵





He will renew IFES

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith.”

(Hebrews 12:1-2)

Covid-19 has brought us turmoil, hardship, and loss. But this World Student Day, we'll be praying for the renewal of our ministry.

- We'll be praying for tired student leaders and staff, many of whom have endured a huge amount of online ministry.
- We'll be praying for universities, cities, and even countries where campus ministry has ceased altogether.
- We'll be praying for pioneering efforts in countries where IFES work has stopped, where IFES work has never flourished, or never been attempted.
- We'll be praying for the renewal of the global fellowship, with student disciples from over 180 countries, in prayer, fervor, and joy, as the [new global strategy](#) unites us in our renewed vision.

In some places, IFES national movements are striving to restart a ministry in a particular area or city. You may remember from this year's Global Generosity Day the replanting efforts made by PSFC in Fiji. Their ministry in Vanua Levu, the Fijian north island, was stalled by the pandemic, but efforts are underway to restart a campus ministry.

Elsewhere, regional teams are taking the initiative to help reignite entire national movements – like in Namibia.

Before the war in Ukraine, CCX was a thriving national movement. But only a few months after the invasion, their ministry had been devastated. Nonetheless, they already have a vision of what rebuilding will look like. We are transformed when, instead of viewing our lives in terms of this world, we live “in terms of the new realm to which we belong, ruled by righteousness, life and the Spirit.”⁵

God uses the prayers of his people to bring renewal in salvation to every nation. He is committed to building his church.





He Renews the World

*“He who was seated on the throne said,
‘I am making everything new!’”*
(Revelation 21:5)

The ultimate renewal of all creation is coming, set in motion with Christ’s resurrection. We experience the first taste of this resurrection life, right here, right now.

Throughout the beginning of Revelation 21, as John describes his vision of the new Jerusalem, references build to the prophecies in Isaiah about the new creation (Isa 65:17; 66:22).

The one seated on the throne declares “I am making everything new”, and we recognize an allusion to the verse that inspires World Student Day this year. In Isaiah, God asks us if we can perceive the new things he is doing. Here, all things are on the glorious cusp of ultimate fulfillment in newness.

Wars, disasters, and pandemics notwithstanding, that is where all things are going.

For those in Christ, these things are not unsure. They are realities.

As we carry on our witness over the next year, we must seek, embrace, rejoice, triumph, rest, and labour in the certain hope that God has renewed us by the Holy Spirit through Christ. He really is transforming us through the renewal of our minds.

He really is working with us to make all things new.





REFERENCES



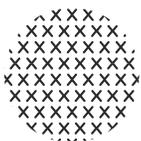
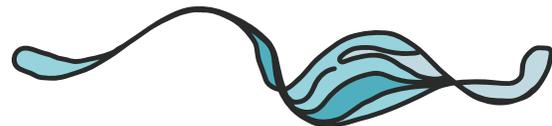
1 *New Bible Commentary*, ed. by G. J. Wenham, J. A. Moyter, D. A. Carson, and R. T. France, 21st Century edn (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994), p. 1314

2 *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. by G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), p. 917

3 John Piper, 'The Renewed Mind and How to Have It', *Desiring God*, (August 2004), < <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/the-renewed-mind-and-how-to-have-it>>, [accessed 22/09/22] (para 5)

4 *Wenham et al.*, p. 1150

5 *Wenham et al.*, p. 1150





How To Be Part of World Student Day

SIGN THE MAP

Let us know you're praying by marking your location on the map! Invite your student group or church to join you.

CONNECT AROUND THE WORLD

World Student Day is an opportunity to begin a connection with a student group in another part of the world. Here are some ways to find another group to pray with:

- Ask international students if they can connect you with a student group in their home country or get in touch with students you know who are studying abroad.
- Pick a country and look up the movement on ifesworld.org to find out more about student life there.
- Join [IFES Connect](#) for opportunities to connect with a different student group in another country.

GET CREATIVE

- Pray as you walk around your campus buildings or accommodation blocks.
- If you're praying with or for another student group, listen to a Christian song in their language.
- Download our maps, prayer cards, and video resources to help you run your own World Student Day prayer meeting.
- Pray and fast to express your longing and dependence on God in physical terms.

DOWNLOAD THE PROMO KIT

Are you making a poster or setting up a social media event? Download our [designer's kit](#) for images and designs you can use to promote World Student Day.

KEEP PRAYING WITH US

Sign up to receive the IFES bi-weekly Prayerline email to inspire your prayers and keep up to date with what's happening in student movements around the world.

